

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 056664

FOLLOWING REPEAT KABUL 01717 ACTIN DEPT MARCH 20TH

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 1717

PASS ALSO AID AND PEACE CORPS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR/ EAID, AF, US

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH NAIM ON AFGHAN-US RELATIONS

SUMMARY: LONG CONVERSATION WITH DAOUD'S BROTHER NAIM MARCH 20
PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY TO BRIEF HIM AND SOLICIT HIS ASSISTANCE
ON A NUMBER OF BILATERAL PROBLEMS, PARTICULARLY PEACE CORPS.
MEETING DEVELOPED INTO A DIALOGUE ON OVERALL US-AFGHAN RELATIONSHIP,
WITH NAIM EXPRESSING HOPE US WOULD MAINTAIN STRONG INTEREST AND
PRESENCE IN AFGHANISTAN AND WOULD CONCENTRATE ITS ASSISTANCE IN THE
HELMAND VALLEY. HE ADMITTED THAT SOME "YOUNG LEFTISTS" IN THE
REGIME TRY TO CAUSE TROUBLE BETWEEN US EVEN THOUGH THEIR ACTIONS
ARE NOT CONSISTENT WITH WHAT THE SOVIETS SAY THEIR POLICY IS.
CONVERSATION ALSO TOUCHED UP NAIM'S FORTHCOMING VISITS TO IRAQ,
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LIBYA, EGYPT AND IRAN AND ON AFGHANISTAN'S RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN.

THE NEXT CONVERSATION OF THIS KIND FOR ME WILL BE WITH DAOUD WITHIN THE NEXT TWO WEEKS.

1. I MET ALONE FOR ONE AND A HALF HOURS MARCH 20 WITH PRESIDENT DAOUD'S BROTHER AND CHIEF ADVISER NAIM. THE BACKGROUND TO THIS MEETING WAS A MEETING I HAD WITH DEPUTY FONMIN ABDULLAH ON MARCH 18. AT THAT MEETING I DESCRIBED IN DETAIL TO ABDULLAH SOME OF THE RECENT PROBLEMS WE HAVE BEEN HAVING AND WHICH HAVE BEEN REPORTED SEPARATELY WITH RESPECT TO THE PEACE CORPS, THE AMERICAN FIELD SERVICE EXCHANGE PROGRAM, AND SPECIFIC QUESTIONS INVOLVING THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS. AFTER HEARING ABOUT THESE PROBLEMS AND CLEARLY CONCERNED THAT THE GOA WAS GIVING ME THE WRONG SIGNALS, ABDULLAH ARRANGED FOR ME TO SEE NAIM.

2. NAIM BEGAN THE CONVERSATION BY SAYING THAT HE HAD HEARD THAT I HAD SOME PROBLEMS AND GRIEVANCES. HE THEN SPENT 15 OR 20 MINUTES REVIEWING THE HISTORY OF US-AFGHAN RELATIONS DURING THE TIME WHEN HE WAS FOREIGN MINISTER. IT WAS CLEAR FROM HIS DESCRIPTION OF THIS PERIOD THAT HE, AND NO DOUBT HIS BROTHER ALSO, CONTINUE TO HARBOR DISAPPOINTMENT ABOUT OUR PAST SUPPORT FOR PAKISTAN AND WHAT HE TERMED OUR LACK OF SUPPORT FOR AFGHANISTAN. AS FOR THE PRESENT, NAIM STATED THAT THERE CONTINUES TO BE DOUBT AND SUSPICION IN AFGHANISTAN ABOUT THE DEGREE OF AMERICA'S INTEREST IN AND SUPPORT FOR AFGHANISTAN. HE SAID HE REALIZES AFGHANISTAN IS A SMALL COUNTRY MANY THOUSANDS OF MILES AWAY FROM THE US AND HE COULD UNDERSTAND WHY THE US MIGHT NOT BE INTERESTED IN AFGHANISTAN. IF THE US IS NOT INTERESTED IN AFGHANISTAN, HE CONTINUED, HE SAID THAT WE SHOULD LET THAT BE KNOWN SO THAT AFGHANISTAN COULD DRAW ITS OWN CONCLUSIONS AND ACT ACCORDINGLY. NAIM ADDED THAT THE GOA IS ITSELF INTERESTED IN A STRONG AMERICAN PRESENCE IN AFGHANISTAN NOT ONLY BECAUSE THE US CAN ASSIST AFGHANISTAN ECONOMICALLY BUT ALSO BECAUSE A STRONG US PRESENCE ASSISTS AFGHANISTAN POLITICALLY.

3. I BEGAN MY RESPONSE BY REPEATING TO NAIM WHAT I HAD TOLD DAOUD LAST NOVEMBER, NAMELY THAT THE US HAS A STRONG INTEREST IN AFGHANISTAN'S INDEPENDENCE AND INTEGRITY AND ALSO IN AFGHANISTAN'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT. I SAID THIS HAD BEEN A CONSISTENT POLICY OF OURS OVER MANY YEARS AND CONTINUES TODAY. I ADDED THAT THE US ALSO ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE TO REGIONAL CONFIDENTIAL

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STABILITY AND THAT IN THIS CONNECTION WE WERE PLEASED WITH AFGHANISTAN'S POLICY OF IMPROVING ITS RELATIONS WITH INDIA AND IRAN.

4. I THEN REVIEWED FOR NAIM THE VARIOUS PROGRAMS OF MUTUAL COOPERATION THAT EXIST BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS. I MENTIONED THAT I HAD WITHIN THE LAST FEW WEEKS SIGNED THREE NEW AID AGREEMENTS WITH HIS GOVERNMENT. I SAID THAT BECAUSE OF NEW AID LEGISLATION OUR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN WOULD IN

THE FUTURE CONCENTRATE MORE ON DIRECT AID TO THE PEOPLE IN THE AREAS OF HEALTH, AGRICULTURE AND EDUCATION AND LESS ON CAPITAL PROJECTS. WE WOULD EXPECT THE LATTER TO BE FINANCED LARGELY BY THE ADB AND THE IBRD TO WHICH WE WERE OF COURSE MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS. I ALSO REVIEWED IN GENERAL TERMS OUR CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM, STRESSING MY CONVICTION THAT TRAINING PEOPLE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF OUR ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN. NAIM NODDED HIS AGREEMENT TO THIS LATTER POINT. I MENTIONED THAT WE ARE ALSO CONTINUING, WITH HIS GOVERNMENT'S AGREEMENT (HE NODDED AGAIN) OUR MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAM.

5. I THEN REVIEWED IN DETAIL THE PROBLEMS WE HAVE HAD WITH OUR PEACE CORPS PROGRAMS IN THE FIELD OF TUBERCULOSIS, AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION AND, MOST RECENTLY, ENGLISH TEACHING. I SAID THAT I HAD NO "GRIEVANCES" BUT THAT I SAW THREE ASPECTS OF THIS MATTER WHICH REQUIRE SOLUTIONS. THE FIRST IS THE FUTURE OF THE ENGLISH TEACHING VOLUNTEERS WHO HAVE BEEN SUDDENLY REMOVED FROM ANY PRODUCTIVE JOBS IN AFGHANISTAN. SECONDLY, I SAID THAT WE NEEDED TO KNOW WHETHER IT WAS THE POLICY OF THE GOA NOT TO HAVE FOREIGN TECHNICIANS WORKING IN PROVINCIAL AREAS. IN THIS CONNECTION, I REFERRED NOT ONLY TO THE PEACE CORPS BUT TO THE RECENT DECISIONS OF THE GOA TO WITHDRAW AMERICAN MEDICAL TEAMS FROM THE HAZARAJAT AND JALALABAD. FINALLY, I SAID THAT WE NEEDED A DECISION AS TO WHETHER THE GOA IS REALLY INTERESTED IN HAVING THE PEACE CORPS REMAIN IN AFGHANISTAN. I SAID THAT FROM THE US STANDPOINT WE CONSIDER THE PEACE CORPS A VALUABLE PROGRAM BOTH BECAUSE OF THE TRAINING IT GIVES YOUNG AMERICANS, BECAUSE VOLUNTEERS DO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO THE RECIPIENT COUNTRY, AND BECAUSE THE PEOPLES OF THE COUNTRIES CONCERNED GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER. I ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT GIVEN THE WAY THE PEACE CORPS PROGRAM WAS NOW BEING HANDLED BY THE GOA, AFGHANISTAN'S REPUTATION IN THE US WAS BEING DAMAGED, INCLUDING PROBABLY IN THE CONGRESS WHICH WOULD HEAR FROM UNHAPPY VOLUNTEERS. I SAID THAT IF THE GOA WANTS THE PEACE CORPS TO

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CONTINUE, I WOULD HOPE THAT WE COULD ARRANGE A MORE EFFICIENT WAY OF USING THE VALUABLE HUMAN RESOURCES WHICH THE PEACE CORPS CAN PROVIDE. IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, THE GOA WISHED TO TERMINATE THE PEACE CORPS PROGRAM IN AFGHANISTAN, WE WOULD OF COURSE ACCEPT THAT DECISION. IN THE MEANTIME, I INFORMED NAIM I HAD ASKED PEACE CORPS WASHINGTON TO DISCONTINUE THE RECRUITMENT OF ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEERS FOR AFGHANISTAN (KABUL 1666).

6. NAIM TOOK NOTES ON MY PRESENTATION AND SAID HE WOULD REPORT WHAT I HAD TOLD HIM TO HIS BROTHER. HE ASKED FOR DETAILS ON WHEN AND BY WHOM THE PEACE CORPS PROGRAMS HAD BEEN REQUESTED. HE THEN REPEATED WHAT HE HAD SAID EARLIER ABOUT THE GOA'S DESIRE FOR A STRONG AMERICAN PRESENCE IN AFGHANISTAN. HE ALSO SAID THAT AFGHANS AND AMERICANS SHOULD GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER. HE ADDED THAT THERE ARE, HOWEVER, PEOPLE, YOUNG PEOPLE IN PARTICULAR, IN

AFGHANISTAN WHO ARE IMBUED WITH LEFTIST IDEAS AND WHO IN ORDER TO PROMOTE THEMSELVES ATTEMPT TO STIR UP DIFFICULTIES BETWEEN AFGHANISTAN AND THE US. (COMMENT: THIS WAS ONE OF THE CLEAREST ADMISSIONS I HAVE HAD THAT DAOUD AND NAIM HAVE NOT YET BROUGHT THE YOUNG FIREBRANDS IN THEIR REGIME FULLY UNDER CONTROL.) HE SAID THAT THESE PEOPLE DO THIS EVEN THOUGH THE SOVIETS HAVE MADE CLEAR TO THE GOA THAT THEY WANT HARMONY AND STABILITY IN THIS REGION. NAIM SAID THAT HE HOPED I WOULD TAKE THE PROBLEM OF THESE PEOPLE INTO CONSIDERATION IN JUDGING THE ACTIONS OF THE GOA.

7. IN RESPONSE I TOLD NAIM THAT MY APPROACH HAD BEEN AND WOULD CONTINUE TO BE NOT TO ACT ON A DECISION OF ANY INDIVIDUAL MEMBER OF THE GOA WITHOUT
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